

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim Status

Claims 1-30 are pending in this application. Claims 1-26 have been allowed. Claims 27-30 have been rejected. By this amendment, claim 27 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and claims 28-30 are herein amended, as shown above. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claim 27 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as allegedly being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the characterization of the claims in the stated rejections and respectfully traverses these rejections. Applicant has herein canceled claim 27 without prejudice or disclaimer and respectfully requests that the rejections to claim 27 be withdrawn as having been rendered moot.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 28-30 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Squilla et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,898,779 (“Squilla”). Specifically, the Office Action states that all steps of the image processing method in claims 18, 22 and 23 have not been recited in claims 28-30. (Office Action, p. 3, ¶ 5).

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the characterization of the claims and prior art in the stated rejections and respectfully traverses these rejections.

Nevertheless, Applicant has herein amended claims 28-30 to recite in independent form the features of claims 18, 22 and 23, respectively. Applicant respectfully submits that the

present invention as claimed is neither taught nor suggested by, and therefore is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of, Squilla. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

CONCLUSION

For the above-stated reasons, this application is respectfully asserted to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable examination on the merits is requested. In the event that a telephone conference would facilitate the examination of this application in any way, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided.

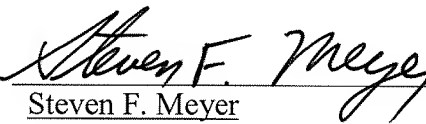
AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required for consideration of this Amendment to Deposit Account No. **13-4500**, Order No. 1232-4666.

In the event that an extension of time is required, the Commissioner is petitioned to grant such extension of time required to render this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No. **13-4500**, Order No. 1232-4666.

Respectfully submitted,
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